

Building for Tomorrow, Today



Seattle Parks and Recreation Strategic Action Plan: 2008-2012

Public Review Draft: March 25, 2008





Creating community through people, parks, and programs

Seattle Parks and Recreation will work with all citizens to be good stewards of our environment, and to provide safe and welcoming opportunities to play, learn, contemplate, and build community.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Seattle Parks and Recreation would like to thank the public, its staff, and City leaders for their contributions in creating the draft Strategic Action Plan: 2008-2012. The draft is the product of a truly collaborative effort.



| BERK & ASSOCIATES |

120 Lakeside Avenue
Suite 200
Seattle, Washington 98122
P (206) 324-8760

www.berkandassociates.com

"Helping Communities and Organizations Create Their Best Futures"

March 25, 2008



To: The Seattle Community

From: Timothy A. Gallagher, Superintendent of Seattle Parks and Recreation

Re: Draft Strategic Action Plan: 2008-2012 (*Building for Tomorrow, Today*)

Seattle Parks and Recreation is pleased to submit to the public the attached draft Strategic Action Plan: 2008-2012 (*Building for Tomorrow, Today*). The draft Plan represents the collaborative efforts of Seattle residents, Parks and Recreation staff, the Mayor's Office, and partners to create an action-oriented work plan to guide the Department over the next five years. The outcome of this effort will help ensure that Parks and Recreation serves as an efficient steward of public investment, while concurrently maintaining a high quality of service and standards that meet community needs.

We are developing this Plan during a transformational moment in Seattle Parks and Recreation's history. Over the last ten years we have seen both a significant expansion of the Parks and Recreation system and rapidly changing local demographic needs. Many of these needs mirror emerging trends that other parks and recreation departments are facing across the country. In light of these changes, we must strategically evaluate our facilities, services, and operations to continue to meet our future commitments and adhere to Parks and Recreation's vision of "Creating community through people, parks, and programs."

From August 2007 to March 2008 (Phase 1), we worked to obtain information that helped shape the draft Plan. Parks and Recreation has dedicated extensive time and resources to ensuring that the draft Plan is being effectively communicated within and outside the Department. During Phase 1, we conducted over 30 community meetings, widely distributed an online and paper survey, and held four Parks and Recreation all-staff meetings. These efforts focused on identifying major issues and policy questions relating to Parks and Recreation's current strengths, challenges and opportunities.

We are now entering the last stage, Phase 2, of the planning process in which Parks and Recreation will listen and respond to City and public feedback on the draft Plan. We will conduct a second round of more than 30 community meetings and Parks and Recreation staff will also have the opportunity to review the draft. Based upon public, Mayor's Office, City Council, and staff comment, we will further refine the draft over the upcoming months and develop it into a final Plan.

The draft Plan is organized into six goals that identify areas where we will dedicate our energies over the next five years. The first four goals are externally focused: providing active stewardship for the City's parks and open spaces; supporting healthy lifestyles and diversity through recreation opportunities; strengthening relationships with the public; and maintaining Parks and Recreation land and facilities. The last two goals are more internally focused and are dedicated to building capacity and culture within Parks and Recreation, as well as strengthening structures and systems across the Department to more effectively serve our needs. We have also been careful to align Plan elements with Mayor Greg Nickels' priorities and initiatives.

We are excited and energized by the thoughtful feedback we have already heard and look forward to continued conversation with City leadership, staff, and the public in finalizing the Plan.

Sincerely,

Timothy Gallagher, Seattle Parks and Recreation Superintendent

SEATTLE PARKS AND RECREATION STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN: 2008-2012

Building for Tomorrow, Today



Introduction

Parks and Recreation is an Essential Component of the Community

Parks and Recreation is an essential element of any healthy and vibrant community, providing individual, social, and economic value. People rely on Seattle's parks, open spaces, and recreation programs for many benefits, ranging from the pursuit of health and fitness, to the desire for self-education, finding a connection with nature, or simply seeking a sense of belonging. Parks and Recreation encourages individuals and groups to connect with one another in a way that creates welcoming, diverse, open, and fun spaces and environments. Parks and Recreation has also become an integral component in economic development and sustainability strategies that help position Seattle as a regional, state, and global leader in the 21st century and beyond.

Seattle Parks and Recreation currently owns approximately 11% of the city's total land area, including over 400 parks and open areas, and over 6,200 acres of park land. Taken as a whole, these parks and open spaces create a green infrastructure that provides a refuge from the bustle of urban life, making Seattle a more beautiful and livable city. Such spaces also serve to sustain and protect our ecosystem for current and future generations through the preservation of habitat, improvement of air and water quality, and encouraging civic pride in the community's natural resources.

Parks and Recreation also operates a range of facilities devoted to providing a wealth of health, recreation, and education opportunities. These facilities include community centers, teen life centers, environmental learning centers, arts venues, athletic facilities, pools, tennis courts, golf courses, fishing piers, and an aquarium. Recreational programming and special events offered within and outside of these facilities work to enrich the lives of all people, and provide special focus for at-risk youth, people with disabilities, immigrant and refugee populations, seniors, minorities, and families.

Parks and Recreation at a Glance

- 6,200 Total Acres
- 430 Parks
- 185 Athletic Fields
- 112 Neighborhood Play Areas
- 9 Swimming Beaches
- 24 Miles of shoreline
- 18 Fishing Piers
- 4 Golf Courses
- 22 Miles of Boulevards
- 26 Community Centers
- 8 Indoor and 2 Outdoor Pools
- 27 Wading Pools
- 151 Outdoor Tennis Courts
- Amy Yee Tennis Center
- Seattle Aquarium
- Volunteer Park Conservatory

Lastly, Parks and Recreation delivers quality customer service through its employees, its most valued resource, who are charged with creating an environment that is safe and beneficial for all. The Department values the community's commitment and support, including volunteer efforts on behalf of Parks and Recreation, and is constantly seeking new and innovative ways to help serve the public.

Parks and Recreation's Role in the Mayor's Priorities and Strategic Initiatives

The Strategic Action Plan is intended to align with and support the Mayor's core priorities and strategic initiatives, detailed below. Such efforts are the foundation of many of the goals found throughout the Plan and will help shape future decision making within Parks and Recreation over the long and short-term.

Mayor Nickels' Priorities

Get Seattle Moving. "Transportation will continue to be a paramount issue for our economy, the environment and the people who live in Seattle. In order for businesses to thrive, generating jobs and tax revenues, we must be able to move goods and people around the region efficiently." – Mayor Greg Nickels

Keep our Neighborhoods Safe. "Public safety is the paramount duty of the City. Our police and fire personnel are first rate and should be recognized as such. We need to give them the tools – training and equipment – to do these difficult jobs, ensure accountability for actions taken, and ensure we are the most prepared city in the United States for natural or man-made disasters." – Mayor Greg Nickels

Create Jobs and Opportunity for All. "Economic Opportunity during these difficult times means creating jobs and an environment that invites new investment in our city." – Mayor Greg Nickels

Build Strong Families and Healthy Communities. "Healthy communities are the heart of a great city. Every part of this city is unique and vital to our growth and our ability to sustain what we love about living and working here. Our diverse cultures bring life, vitality, and economic growth to Seattle. As Mayor, I want to foster a renewed commitment to our neighborhoods. That means paying attention to the needs of each community and responding to those needs in a meaningful way." – Mayor Greg Nickels

Mayor Nickels' Initiatives

Seattle Climate Action Now. "This grassroots campaign encourages everyone in Seattle to reduce global warming pollution at home, on the road and in their neighborhoods." – Mayor Greg Nickels

<http://seattlecan.org/>

U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement. "The U.S. leads the world in greenhouse gas pollution when we should be leading it toward a solution. That is why it is so important for cities like Seattle to step up and provide the leadership that is lacking in Washington D.C." – Mayor Greg Nickels

<http://www.seattle.gov/mayor/climate/>

Mayor Nickels' Green Ribbon Commission on Climate Protection. "The Commission calls on the entire community to join the fight against climate disruption with the release of the Seattle Climate Action Plan, the most comprehensive program in the city's history for reducing greenhouse gas emissions." – Mayor Greg Nickels
<http://www.seattle.gov/climate/about.htm>

Environmental Action Agenda. "The cornerstone of this agenda is a new goal for the City to reduce regional greenhouse gas emissions across our community and region, seeking to meet or beat the Kyoto target." – Mayor Greg Nickels
<http://www.seattle.gov/mayor/issues/ea/>

Emergency Preparedness. "My goal is to make Seattle the most prepared city in America. There's still more to do, but in the last three years we've significantly increased our ability to deal with natural or man-made disasters. We've strengthened infrastructure like bridges and fire stations; helped businesses and residents to retrofit; participated in national emergency exercises and made sure our plans include citizens who are vulnerable." – Mayor Greg Nickels
<http://www.seattle.gov/mayor/issues/emergencyPrep/>

Pedestrian Safety. "Year after year Seattle wins awards for being a walkable city. I want to make sure residents and visitors can walk throughout Seattle safely – that means increasing pedestrian and driver awareness." – Mayor Greg Nickels
<http://www.seattle.gov/mayor/issues/pedsafety/>

Race and Social Justice Initiative. "The City of Seattle is becoming increasingly diverse. This diversity gives us much to celebrate, but it also challenges us to be respectful of all backgrounds. We want to ensure that the City is responsive to all the communities we serve and all the people who work here." – Mayor Greg Nickels
<http://www.seattle.gov/mayor/issues/rsji/>

Green Seattle Partnership. "The City's Green Seattle Partnership with the Cascade Land Conservancy was formed to restore 2,500 acres of forested parkland by 2025. Visit the Partnership's website to learn more about the program and how you can get involved. The site also includes best practices for removing invasive plants." – Mayor Greg Nickels
<http://greenseattle.org/>

Restore our Waters. "Seattle is defined by water – our creeks, lakes, Puget Sound, the Duwamish River and other water bodies make the city a great place for people and for fish and other wildlife. The City is making smart investments to restore habitat along our shorelines, from creating fish-friendly beaches to planting native vegetation for wildlife habitat. You can help by improving habitat on your property, reducing pollution in our creeks or even planning your own neighborhood restoration project." – Mayor Greg Nickels
<http://www.seattle.gov/mayor/issues/row.htm>

Parks and Recreation's Budget, Funding, and Fee Structure

Parks and Recreation has an operating budget of \$125.3 million for 2008. The operating budget is the money required for everyday operations such as the delivery of programs and maintaining land and facilities. It is supported by a mix of revenue sources, including the City's General Fund, dedicated taxes, user fees, and concession payments from vendors. Capital projects are funded separately from voter-approved bonds and levies, grants, and the City's Cumulative Reserve Subfund.

Under the City Charter, the Parks Fund receives a dedicated 10% of tax and license revenues that would otherwise accrue to the General Fund. These "charter revenues" total approximately \$36.2 million for 2008, with the largest amounts coming from the City's general business and occupation (B&O) tax and various utility taxes. The General Fund also provides \$39.6 million of direct support for the Parks Fund. Fees and charges are the largest remaining share of revenues, accounting for about \$27.0 million for 2008.

Charter revenues are volatile and tend to change in response to economic conditions. To remove this uncertainty from the Parks and Recreation budget, the City in recent years has committed to provide the budgeted total of General Fund and Charter revenues to the Parks Fund each year. If Charter revenues fall below estimates, then additional General Fund support is provided. Thus, if the economy is strong and Charter revenues exceed estimates, the amount of General Fund provided is reduced accordingly. Balancing the Charter Revenues and General Fund insulates the Parks Fund from short-term revenue fluctuations.

Various factors are considered in setting fees, including the cost of service, fees charged for similar programs in neighboring jurisdictions, and social policy objectives. The draft Plan calls for a fresh look at setting fees. Fees typically are adjusted every two years through the biennial budget process.

How to Read the Draft Strategic Action Plan

The draft Strategic Action Plan is based on an open process of collaborative thinking, decision-making, and input from Parks and Recreation staff, City leadership, and the public. The Plan is designed to serve as a work plan that identifies goals that Parks and Recreation will focus on over the next five years, as well as outlines specific action strategies that will help accomplish these goals. Specifically identified are initiatives and work needed for Parks and Recreation to respond effectively to new external conditions, such as demographic and economic changes.

Vision, Mission, and Values

The vision, mission, and values statements, defined below, provide the framework for the draft Strategic Action Plan. These statements are not set in stone, and can be refined or changed over time to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the community.

Vision. The Vision Statement provides an ideal description of what the public finds important about Parks and Recreation and wants to strive toward. Vision statements inspire, energize and create a mental picture of a community's aspirations.

Mission. The Mission Statement articulates Parks and Recreation's fundamental purpose and provides a roadmap for how the Department will achieve its vision. It describes what Parks and Recreation will do today to make the world a better place tomorrow.

Values. Values are qualities that represent the public and Parks and Recreation's highest priorities and beliefs. It describes in detail how Parks and Recreation values the community, its employees, and the environment.

Goal, Strategic Initiative, Action Strategy, and Task

The draft Plan is comprised of six goals, each with its own set of strategic initiatives, action strategies, and tasks. The Plan proceeds from a general to a detailed level: strategic initiatives describe higher level objectives and tasks outline very specific action steps.

For example:

GOAL I. Goals are areas where Parks and Recreation will focus over the five-year planning period. The draft Plan's goals are complementary and support the overall vision, mission, and values. There are a total of six goals in the draft Plan (labeled I to VI).

A. Strategic Initiatives are specific topics within each goal that Parks and Recreation will focus on to achieve that particular goal. There are four to six strategic initiatives within each goal (labeled A to F).

1. **Action Strategies** are the specific steps Parks and Recreation will take to accomplish the strategic initiatives and goals. For the final plan, action strategies will be SMART (specific, measurable, action-orientated, realistic, and time stamped) and provide clear direction on what needs to be accomplished within the five-year planning period. There are two to seven action strategies under each strategic initiative (numbered one to seven).

i. **Tasks** are more detailed assignments with action strategies. Tasks are also SMART. Tasks are numbered i through x. Not every action strategy has a task.

SEATTLE PARKS AND RECREATION STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN: 2008-2012

Building for Tomorrow, Today



SEATTLE PARKS AND RECREATION'S VISION, MISSION & VALUES

Vision

Creating community through people, parks, and programs

Mission

Seattle Parks and Recreation will work with all citizens to be good stewards of our environment, and to provide safe and welcoming opportunities to play, learn, contemplate, and build community.

Service Delivery Values

People

- Strengthen Relationships and Sense of Community
- Provide Accessible, Safe, and Welcoming Spaces to All People and Communities
- Promote Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Deliver Outstanding Customer Service

Parks

- Enhance Ecological Preservation and Environmental Sustainability
- Continue the Preservation of the Olmsted Legacy

Programs

- Encourage Health and Fitness
- Provide Opportunities for Lifelong Play, Creativity, Learning, and Discovery
- Strengthen Accountability for Projects and Programs

SUMMARY OF PLAN: GOALS AND STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

GOAL I: STEWARD SEATTLE'S PARKS AND OPEN SPACES FOR LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY

- A. Enhance Citywide Planning for Parks and Open Space
- B. Increase Restoration Efforts of Seattle's Natural Ecosystem
- C. Fulfill and Expand the Olmsted Vision and Plan
- D. Develop and Maintain Partnerships to Enhance Seattle's Parks and Open Spaces
- E. Facilitate Public Access to Parks and Open Spaces
- F. Revitalize Center City Parks

GOAL II: PROVIDE RECREATION AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES TO SUPPORT HEALTHY AND DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

- A. Encourage Healthy and Active Lifestyles for All
- B. Provide an Inclusive Environment for Youth and Teens
- C. Promote Creativity Through Opportunities in Arts, Culture, and Imaginative, Improvisational Play
- D. Foster Environmental Engagement
- E. Provide Programming that Serves and Celebrates the City's Diverse Population

GOAL III: ACTIVELY ENGAGE AND BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH SEATTLE'S DIVERSE POPULATION

- A. Establish and Implement New Approaches to Outreach and Relationship Building
- B. Effectively Communicate Parks and Recreation Services
- C. Provide Opportunities for Volunteers and Community Stewardship Projects
- D. Implement Customer Service Standards
- E. Build Organizational Capacity for Public Engagement

GOAL IV: MAINTAIN PARKS AND RECREATION'S LAND AND FACILITIES

- A. Maintain Parks and Facilities to Enrich the Recreational Experience of Patrons
- B. Develop a Maintenance Management Plan
- C. Ensure Public Safety at Parks and Facilities
- D. Expand Green Management Practices to Reduce Parks and Recreation's Carbon Footprint
- E. Continue the Development of a Strategic Asset Management Plan
- F. Build Upon the System-Wide Emergency Management Plan and Prepare for Citywide Emergencies

GOAL V: DEVELOP TEAM CAPACITY AND ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

- A. Increase Opportunities for Professional Development and Team Learning
- B. Adapt Human Resource Practices and Processes to Align with Desired Organizational Changes
- C. Promote Staff Health and Safety
- D. Develop and Implement Workforce Equity and Succession Planning

GOAL VI: STRENGTHEN ORGANIZATIONAL SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES

- A. Identify Best Business Models and Partnerships that Support Efficient and Effective Service and Program Delivery
- B. Optimize Parks and Recreation's Organizational Model
- C. Develop a Comprehensive and Integrated Management Information System
- D. Develop Recreation Management Policies and Evaluation Criteria
- E. Evaluate Fees and Charges Policies for Programs and Services

GOAL I: STEWARD SEATTLE'S PARKS AND OPEN SPACES FOR LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY

Parks and Recreation will sustain and plan for the future of park land, as needed, for the public to enjoy. Parks and Recreation is committed to the preservation of park land and open space in a manner that conserves the natural legacy and contributes to the ecological health of the city. Over the next five years, Parks and Recreation will: plan for the future open space needs of the city; increase restoration of the urban forest and open space, with a focus on preservation through community partnerships; evaluate opportunities to build upon the Olmsted legacy; and seek ways to revitalize Center City parks.

A. Enhance Citywide Planning for Parks and Open Space

1. Create and adopt a consistent land classification system that defines appropriate uses

- i. Define and classify all Seattle parks and open space land
- ii. Communicate these categories effectively and consistently, defining what the land classification system means in terms of intensity of use, kinds of use, and potential future development

2. Establish a citizen based advisory group to evaluate park and open space needs citywide and recommend potential park and open space projects and funding options

- i. Analyze Seattle's demographic and housing trends to determine current and future park and open space needs
- ii. Assess the geographic equity and distribution of Parks and Recreation's land, facilities, programs, and services
- iii. Assess programs and services at a system-wide level to identify usage and needs
- iv. Participate in Seattle Neighborhood Plan update processes with the public and other City departments
- v. Evaluate potential funding options which may include a voter approved measure, private fundraising, grants, or other funding resources

3. Acquire facilities proactively in anticipation of projected system needs and demands

- i. Conduct a citywide analysis for 2010 and 2024 that identifies the types and locations of park property (e.g. neighborhood park, wildlife corridor) and facilities (e.g. community centers, pools) that will be needed

4. Develop criteria for acquiring new facilities and fixed assets

- i. Assess the current and future benefits associated with acquiring facilities, such as increased number of programming and revenue opportunities

Fixed assets are equipment used to maintain, operate, and improve Parks and Recreation facilities and park space

- ii. Assess the current and future costs associated with acquiring facilities, including levels of staffing, maintenance, renovation, and energy required for operation and maintenance
- iii. Determine if the acquisition is aligned with overall vision, mission, values, and core functions
- iv. Determine if the acquisition increases the geographic equity of land and facilities

B. Increase Restoration Efforts of Seattle's Natural Ecosystem

1. Plant and maintain trees and plants to promote a healthy urban environment and reforestation

- i. Create a maintenance plan that specifies the population of trees and tree canopy desired and appropriate maintenance levels
- ii. Work with the Department of Planning and Development to implement the **Heritage Tree Program** for particular sites
- iii. Develop a promotional campaign for the Heritage Tree program through strategic communication and marketing efforts (e.g., ensuring proper signage at parks and facilities)
- iv. Continue to develop and apply environmental metrics (e.g., carbon sequestration and storm water containment) for trees and ecosystems

The **Heritage Tree Program** identifies and promotes the preservation of special trees in the city.

2. Increase planting of **native species where appropriate**

- i. Develop a native planting policy to improve plant diversity and reduce the use of non-native invasives (where appropriate) within the city's urban landscape and ecosystem constraints
- ii. Identify areas where native habitat should be improved to protect wildlife and enhance wildlife corridors
- iii. Work with appropriate state and local agencies to create and enhance wildlife corridors by supporting initiatives that improve environmental quality and ecosystem connections

Native species are types of plants that naturally grow in a particular region, state, ecosystem, and habitat without direct or indirect human actions.

3. Develop strategies to control invasive plant and animal species

- i. Develop a plan to enhance the recruitment of volunteers and track progress in achieving restoration goals
- ii. Continue to work with other departments, particularly Seattle Public Utilities and Seattle Department of Transportation, to achieve restoration goals
- iii. Enhance education efforts and outreach at the Environmental Learning Centers regarding invasive species removal and plant and tree selection

C. Fulfill and Expand the **Olmsted Vision and Plan**

1. **Communicate the Olmsted vision and Plan, including the location and current status of the Olmsted parks**

- i. Develop a promotional plan to identify the components and benefits of Seattle's Olmsted Plan parks

2. **Evaluate Parks and Recreation's progress in preserving and managing the Olmsted Plan**

- i. Identify and implement management standards for historic Olmsted parks
- ii. Evaluate possibilities to enhance park and open space linkages that strengthen connections consistent with the 1903 Olmsted Plan

3. **Consider opportunities to extend the Olmsted Plan beyond its original boundaries**

The **Olmsted Plan** was created by the Olmsted Brothers at the turn of the last century and recognizes the need to preserve and protect Seattle's spectacular natural landscape while providing open space and healthy recreational opportunities for its rapidly growing population. The Olmsted Brothers proposed a comprehensive citywide system of parks and boulevards that today is one of the most fully-realized systems of Olmsted planned landscapes in the country.

D. **Develop and Maintain Partnerships to Enhance Seattle's Parks and Open Spaces**

1. **Support **Green Seattle Partnership** goals to restore Seattle's forested parklands**

- i. Explore partnerships with City departments and nonprofit organizations
- ii. Develop a plan to expand volunteer programs across the city

The **Green Seattle Partnership** with the Cascade Land Conservancy was created to restore 2,500 acres of forested parkland by 2025. The Partnership envisions a city with diverse, invasive-free, sustainable, forested parklands.

2. **Seek funding for the long-term maintenance component of the Green Seattle Partnership**

- i. Explore additional funding opportunities and volunteer efforts to remove non-native plant species

3. **Continue to partner with the **Seattle Parks Foundation** and explore additional opportunities to support the acquisition, construction, landscaping, and restoration of parks and facilities**

The **Seattle Parks Foundation** is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to improving and expanding Seattle's parks and green spaces.

E. Facilitate Public Access to Parks and Open Spaces

1. Evaluate the need for increased public transportation to and within parks and open spaces

- i. Identify opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle enjoyment through the periodic closure of Parks and Recreation's roads
- ii. Develop and distribute maps of Parks and Recreation's trails through community centers, educational learning centers, and over the internet

2. Effectively manage the encroachment of private property on Parks and Recreation's land

- i. Inventory encroachments on Parks and Recreation's property and recommend a management program

Did you know:

- Seattle's largest park is Discovery Park at 534 acres
- Seattle has two parks (Genesee and Interbay Golf Center) on former landfills
- Seattle's oldest park, dedicated in 1884, is Denny Park at Dexter and Denny
- Seattle has three parks (Magnuson, Discovery, and Lake Union parks) on former military bases

F. Revitalize Center City Parks

1. Use the **Downtown Parks Renaissance Plan as a guide for improving and creating more family-friendly Center City parks**

- i. Continue to proactively partner with the downtown community, including Downtown Seattle Association and the Metropolitan Improvement District to increase use of Center City parks
- ii. Implement a coordinated, citywide action plan to improve Center City parks including management, safety, design, and maintenance
- iii. Develop a multi-year funding plan for investments

The **Downtown Parks Renaissance Plan** was developed in 2006 and outlines strategies to promote active use and safety at Center City parks.

2. Assess the Center City area to identify opportunities for acquisition of more green space

3. Work with the Seattle Department of Transportation to enhance the City's street trees and plantings

4. Collaborate with the Department of Planning and Development and Seattle Department of Transportation to implement the **Green Streets Program**

5. Explore options with Seattle City Light and other departments to co-locate facilities and/or open space (e.g. Parks and Recreation development at a substation)

- i. Evaluate and recommend options for facilities to serve families and youth living in the Center City

The **Green Streets Program** is intended to reduce the amount of street area devoted to traffic and parking and to increase the amount of space for sidewalks and landscaping.

6. Assess the impact of the **Park Rangers Program in terms of enhanced safety and enjoyment of Center City parks**

The **Park Rangers Program**, outlined in the Downtown Parks Renaissance Plan, places unarmed rangers in parks to provide an official presence and make residents and City workers feel more comfortable being in the parks. The rangers are able to issue tickets and enforce laws that allow the City to bar repeat troublemakers from City parks, but they must call police officers to deal with more difficult situations.

GOAL II: PROVIDE RECREATION AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES TO SUPPORT HEALTHY AND DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

Parks and Recreation will provide relevant recreation opportunities that support physical and mental wellness. Parks and Recreation's programs and services encourage health and fitness for all and promote lifelong play, discovery, creativity, and learning. Over the next five years, Parks and Recreation will focus on: encouraging physical and mental wellness; promoting the participation of youth, teens, and seniors; supporting arts, culture, and imaginative play; fostering environmental stewardship; and aligning programming goals with the needs of diverse populations.

A. Encourage Healthy and Active Lifestyles for All

1. Develop health and fitness programs and services that meet community needs

- i. Develop an evaluation system that may include pre- and post-assessments to determine fitness improvements of participants and/or citywide obesity rates

2. Evaluate trends, data, and community input to encourage **emerging sports and fitness activities**

3. Encourage active lifestyles through the continued improvement of existing facilities that promote health and fitness

- i. Develop a coordinated marketing plan to promote exercise rooms

Emerging Sports and Fitness Activities are those sports relatively new to Seattle Parks and Recreation. In recent years these have included ultimate Frisbee, BMX bike courses, and the rocketing popularity of lacrosse.

4. Create opportunities for unstructured play to encourage imagination and self-motivation

- i. Evaluate current unstructured play opportunities at all the community centers
- ii. Establish design standards that encourage unstructured play for both new and current parks and open spaces

5. Investigate opportunities to provide new facilities for sports and activities that promote healthy lifestyles

- i. Establish standards for amenities needed at such facilities (e.g. restrooms, concession facilities, or utility hook-ups)

6. Continue to implement the **Citywide 2007 Skatepark Plan**

- i. Identify specific skatepark projects for the next five years
- ii. Seek funding for a major skatepark in South Seattle

The **Citywide 2007 Skatepark Plan** identifies a network of safe, legal places throughout the City, where people of all ages, races, and genders can enjoy skateboarding. The plan recommends a tiered system of sizes and types of skateparks that are most appropriate for specific Seattle neighborhoods.

B. Provide an Inclusive Environment for Youth and Teens

1. Evaluate the effectiveness of existing programs for youth

- i. Audit the Department of Social and Health Services licensed child care programs in Parks and Recreation facilities using qualitative standards
- ii. Establish baseline participation data and work to increase engagement of youth in citywide athletics programs
- iii. Develop and implement an approach to establish a “Recreation Plan” that identifies goals for each child in before-and-after school programs
- iv. Work to expand Recreation Plans to other youth

2. Develop and implement approaches to reach youth who do not currently use Parks and Recreation facilities and programs

- i. Evaluate the need and, if necessary, develop youth sports leagues for new and emerging sports (such as Ultimate Frisbee)
- ii. Investigate a potential partnership with Seattle Public Schools for non-varsity middle school athletics

3. Partner with other City departments and organizations to create a citywide strategy that supports youth and teen development

- i. Work with other City agencies, nonprofits, and community members to create and implement a **prevention, maintenance, and intervention** program for youth
- ii. Work with community police teams, facility supervisors, crew chiefs, and others to develop standard approaches to managing prevention, maintenance, and intervention for youth-related activities
- iii. Work with partner agencies to offer their services and resources at Teen Centers and Late Night programs
- iv. Create programs that build self esteem and other developmental assets needed for youth to make positive choices
- v. Develop a youth workforce program that builds skills and an appreciation of the environment

Prevention, Maintenance, and Intervention recognizes that different strategies are needed to ensure that all young people grow safely and successfully into adulthood. Prevention models develop internal strength, commitments, and values young people need to guide their choices, priorities, and decisions. Maintenance models reinforce prevention models and provide experiences that surround youth with support, empowerment, and constructive use of time. Intervention models assist staff with tools in managing conflict and, when necessary, involve legal enforcement.

C. Promote Creativity Through Opportunities in Arts, Culture, and Imaginative, Improvisational Play

1. **Encourage a basic understanding and appreciation of arts and culture**
 - i. Provide arts-and-culture-related programs and services that engage youth early in their development
 - ii. Provide intergenerational and multicultural opportunities for people to engage in the arts
 - iii. Encourage a diverse mix of amateur and professional artists who perform and connect with the community
2. **Continue to collaborate and explore new arts and culture programming opportunities with the Mayor's Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs and other public agencies, arts organizations, and schools**
3. **Provide forums that enable the public to experience Seattle's rich ethnic and cultural diversity**

Did you know:

- Seattle Parks and Recreation has six performing and visual arts facilities, including: the Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center, the Community Theater at Warren G. Magnuson Park, and the Alki Arts Studio
- Seattle parks are home to two museums, the Seattle Asian Art Museum in Volunteer Park and the Museum of History and Industry in McCurdy Park

D. Foster Environmental Engagement

1. **Identify areas where environmental sustainability and health and fitness initiatives can be integrated**
 - i. Develop and implement a **Green Calorie Program** to combine environmental sustainability with healthy activities
2. **Develop and promote new programs and services at Environmental Learning Centers that reflect Parks and Recreation's stewardship and sustainability goals**
 - i. Evaluate opportunities to partner with environmental organizations such as the Nature Conservancy and Audubon
3. **Develop a plan that supports opportunities for the public to observe and enjoy nature**
 - i. Evaluate youth and adult volunteerism in parks and identify areas for new volunteer opportunities

The **Green Calorie Program** promotes physical activity and wellness programs with environmentally smart activities. A green calorie is burned while performing activities that do not leave a carbon footprint and enrich the natural environment. For example, an individual may burn green calories when pulling out invasive plant species by hand or riding his/her bike to a neighborhood clean-up event.

E. Provide Programming that Serves and Celebrates Seattle's Diverse Population

1. Create a welcoming environment for immigrant and refugee populations in Parks and Recreation's parks, facilities, and programming

- i. Enhance customer service by training and developing staff in multicultural communication and understanding
- ii. Actively recruit employees from within immigrant and refugee communities
- iii. Examine and update current policies to be inclusive and respectful of immigrant and refugee populations
- iv. Assess the current signage policy to ensure appropriate multilingual information is provided

Seattle's Diverse Population encompasses over 80 different ethnic groups who speak over a hundred different languages. The people who live, work, and play in Seattle experience this diversity as a source of learning, enrichment and growth.

2. Identify immigrant and refugee community recreation and program needs

- i. Develop a plan to work with community centers and other organizations to reach out and engage in discussions with immigrant and refugee community members to determine specific recreation and program needs
- ii. Develop a plan to work with local ethnic groups to encourage and support special events that promote diversity as a community asset
- iii. Determine when it is necessary to have separate programs and when Parks should try to incorporate immigrant and refugee programs into community-wide programs

3. Develop a plan that supports intergenerational and family-oriented recreation opportunities

- i. Develop additional recreation opportunities that allow family members to participate together
- ii. Create opportunities for families to engage in unstructured play
- iii. Evaluate opportunities to provide more volunteer experiences for adults who have the skills and resources to engage with youth

4. Encourage health and fitness through Lifelong Recreation Programs in partnership with community centers, environmental learning centers, and other Parks and Recreation programs

- i. Evaluate and coordinate a plan to offer potential services to people age 50+ in coordination with Senior Center programs as appropriate
- ii. Evaluate methods to establish the co-location of targeted senior centers with community centers

Lifelong Recreation Programs are for people who are 50 years and older

- iii. Increase recreation opportunities for people age 50+ and include them in the process of programmatic planning to meet the diverse needs of different age cohorts as appropriate
 - iv. Include in this 50+ recreational programming a deliberate approach to establishing age-blended (inter-generational) opportunities that focus on common goals and interests
- 5. Support programming and scheduling that increases recreational use for people with disabilities**

GOAL III: ACTIVELY ENGAGE AND BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH SEATTLE'S DIVERSE POPULATION

Parks and Recreation will strive to build and sustain trusting relationships by using innovative approaches to engage in dialog with the public and all stakeholders. Over the next five years, Parks and Recreation will focus on ensuring that the public has the information they need to access Parks and Recreation's facilities, parks, programs, and services, and that internal staff have the information needed from the public to make sound policy, budget, legislative, and program decisions. Such information will help ensure that all interactions with the public result in more productive relationships and greater mutual understanding and respect.

A. Establish and Implement New Approaches to Outreach and Relationship Building

1. Establish public outreach policies for inclusionary, racially, and culturally appropriate engagement with the public

- i. Identify best practices for Parks and Recreation's community outreach efforts
- ii. Develop guidelines for park planners to use in public engagement activities, including strategies for appropriate **follow through** with participants and the larger community
- iii. Create a process for ongoing communication, engagement, and collaboration beyond specific projects or issues, with communities throughout Seattle
- iv. Identify tools that will help design and evaluate outreach that meets the city's diverse needs
 - o Consider racial, cultural, socioeconomic, and logistical barriers that discourage participation in public processes, programs, and services
- v. Change policies and common practices when they are determined to be inconsistent with public engagement and race and social justice values
- vi. Coordinate with citywide efforts to reach minority and immigrant communities
- vii. Complete an inventory of documents needing to be translated and implement their translation

Follow through is Parks and Recreation's efforts to maintain two-way communication with the public, including publishing public meeting summaries and providing information about how public comments are used and considered. Parks and Recreation understands the importance of follow through communication and is working to improve these practices.

2. Identify people who don't use Parks and Recreation's programs and facilities

- i. Develop strategies to invite people who don't use Parks and Recreation programs and facilities to use them

3. Develop a plan to work with stakeholders in the design, delivery, and evaluation of Parks and Recreation's programs and services

- i. Conduct a complete analysis of Parks and Recreation's stakeholder groups
- ii. Create and regularly update a stakeholder inventory that includes contact information, their historical relationship with Parks and Recreation, and their primary interests and concerns

B. Effectively Communicate Parks and Recreation Services

1. Develop a cohesive Parks and Recreation story and key messages

- i. Promote Parks and Recreation's vision, mission, and values clearly and consistently in marketing materials
- ii. Develop a strategic communications plan to share Parks and Recreation's story, successes and challenges, and to guide outreach activities and promotion activities
- iii. Implement the communication plan broadly, using the web and other media

2. Use **marketing to increase public participation and knowledge of Parks and Recreation's facilities, services, and programs**

Marketing is Parks and Recreation efforts to educate and engage the public to increase the community's opportunities to use the parks and recreation system.

- i. Engage in innovative marketing activities that sustain the engagement of traditional patrons and attract new patrons
- ii. Ensure all Parks and Recreation facilities have information about all facility offerings through signage, brochures, catalogues, and fliers
- iii. Partner with nonprofits and other City agencies to post signage, brochures, catalogues, and fliers to promote Parks and Recreation offerings
- iv. Develop a plan to work with the local media, including daily and weekly newspapers, blogs, websites, radio, and television, to feature frequently a park, community center, program, or other service
- v. Evaluate opportunities to reach youth including use of social networking sites like MySpace

3. Improve Parks and Recreation's website to provide broader and more effective communication

- i. Continue to make the Parks and Recreation's website inclusive, user-friendly, and searchable, particularly for youth
- ii. Continue troubleshooting and expanding the **CLASS** registration website to include availability of all programs, services, and facilities

CLASS is an online registration system currently used by Parks and Recreation.

C. Provide Opportunities for Volunteers and Community Stewardship Projects

1. Continue to provide a range of volunteer opportunities for people and organizations who want to share their time, energy, and resources to improve Parks and Recreation
2. Develop consistent volunteer orientation and/or training programs to be implemented prior to volunteer activities
3. Evaluate volunteer programs to ensure coordination across programs and services
4. Expand the existing volunteer recognition program
5. Create a department-wide strategy for youth volunteering
6. Develop a database to organize volunteer information and increase communication

D. Implement Customer Service Standards

1. Build public engagement and customer service duties and expectations into employee job descriptions and accountability agreements
2. Clearly identify appropriate channels for the public to obtain information and provide feedback, opinions, and perspectives
 - i. Establish avenues for “open-door” public communication that include designating a comments and concerns email address, phone-line, mail address, web form, and paper form/box at each facility
 - ii. Update Parks and Recreation Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for posting to the website
3. Develop and implement a two-way communication policy for Parks and Recreation to acknowledge and respond to all comments
 - i. Clearly communicate response timelines and who is responsible for responding to public requests for information
 - ii. Assess internal policies, procedures, common practices, and behaviors to ensure they result in unparalleled customer service and a beneficial public process
 - iii. Develop a policy to effectively communicate decisions that affect patrons and stakeholders
 - iv. Identify how other organizations deliver information in non-traditional and creative ways

E. Build Organizational Capacity for Public Engagement

- 1. Train staff to strive for excellence in their relationships with Parks and Recreation patrons**
 - i. Communicate to all staff that they are ambassadors for Parks and Recreation
 - ii. Provide staff training in customer service when they enter the organization
 - iii. Provide training for staff who are assigned public engagement responsibilities, specifically in appropriate responses to challenging situations and dynamics
 - iv. Train staff to respond to non-English speaking community members
- 2. Increase awareness and consistency in public engagement activities by maintaining a user-friendly master calendar of such activities for internal and external use**

GOAL IV: MAINTAIN PARKS AND RECREATION'S LAND AND FACILITIES

Parks and Recreation will manage its land and facilities in a manner that contributes to public pride and a high quality of life in Seattle. Parks and Recreation values ecological preservation, environmental sustainability, and the preservation of the Olmsted legacy and incorporates these values when making decisions over how land and facilities will be maintained and managed. Over the next five years, Parks and Recreation will focus on: planning and preventive maintenance; ensuring public safety at Parks and Recreation facilities; expanding green management practices for carbon reduction; developing a strategic asset management plan; and preparing for citywide emergencies.

A. Maintain Parks and Facilities to Enrich the Recreational Experience of Patrons

1. Evaluate maintenance efforts to determine appropriate staffing levels at each facility

- i. Determine, based on industry standards, hours needed to maintain a specific type of facility
- ii. Examine the number of **productive hours** a full-time Parks and Recreation employee has available annually for maintenance duties

A **Facility** is any structure on Parks and Recreation's land (e.g. community centers and comfort stations).

2. Establish maintenance standards for all Parks and Recreation facilities

- i. Create measurable goals for key indicators, such as litter reduction, recycling, and maintenance response requests

Productive Hours include the time staff spends at their assigned tasks, and does not include travel time to the job site, sick leave, or vacation.

3. Assess costs associated with upgrading nine facilities: community centers at Hiawatha, Green Lake, Jefferson, Loyal Heights, Queen Anne, Magnolia, and Rainier Beach; the gym at Van Asselt Community Center, the swimming pool at Rainier Beach Community Center, and the Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center

4. Identify current park and facility renovation needs

- i. Categorize renovation needs based on criteria such as whether the needs are legally mandated, required for safety, reduce operations and maintenance costs, and/or improve a park or facility

5. Continue implementation of approved multi-year plans to replace, upgrade, and maintain golf courses, playfields, field lighting, play areas, irrigation, landscape, and similar critical assets

6. Continue use of best practices for maintenance of golf courses, playfields, play areas, irrigation, landscape, and similar critical assets

B. Develop a Maintenance Management Plan

1. Evaluate industry standards for regular maintenance and management of facilities and parks and determine if such standards are applicable for Parks and Recreation

- i. Collect internal data such as staff hours dedicated to maintenance, equipment used for maintenance, and how frequently a facility or park is cleaned, to determine current maintenance levels
- ii. Compare current maintenance levels with industry standards to identify potential gaps and needs

2. Specify standard maintenance procedures across Parks and Recreation according to specific types of park land or facility

Did you know:

- Seattle Parks and Recreation maintains and operates 488 facilities, totaling more than 1 million square feet

C. Ensure Public Safety at Parks and Facilities

1. Evaluate the safety of parks and facilities using available statistics

- i. Monitor and evaluate police crime data, Parks and Recreation incident reports, Parks and Recreation work orders, visitor and staff complaints, and Parks and Recreation security logs to determine which parks and facilities are perceived as unsafe for the public and staff

2. Identify and implement remedies to address safety concerns

- i. Identify and recommend levels of staff necessary to increase presence and improve perceived and real levels of security (e.g., frontline and maintenance staff and park rangers)
 - o Evaluate opportunities in parks to improve lighting and security measures, and increase programming efforts in parks and open spaces after hours
 - o Establish standard lighting levels for different event lighting in parks and assess individual parks to ensure appropriate lighting levels

3. Evaluate existing signage and system-wide signage standards

- i. Standardize regulatory and information signage to ensure that safety rules and signage are understandable to non-English speakers
- ii. Assess standards for signage messages, such as content of signage, frequency of signage postings, and timelines (e.g., how long the information presented is applicable)

D. Expand Green Management Practices to Reduce Parks and Recreation's Carbon Footprint

1. Define the components of an “**ideal green park**,” with evaluation criteria supporting sustainability, such as water consumption and power use

- i. Continue to implement, where possible, applicable elements of an “ideal green park” into current and future parks

2. Ensure that grounds maintenance activities incorporate green practices

- i. Continue to reduce the use of pesticides
- ii. Support efficient water use, such as recycling gray water
- iii. Evaluate Parks and Recreation's capital needs and priority levels to support long-term energy efficiency
- iv. Continue to install high efficiency fixtures in all buildings

3. Manage equipment to reduce sound generation and emissions

4. Explore options for encouraging alternatives to using Parks and Recreation's vehicles

5. Publicize green activities to model green practices for the public

6. Develop design standards and specifications that require contractors to use green construction techniques

7. Strive to achieve **LEED Gold** with new construction and **LEED Silver** with renovations

An **Ideal Green Park** represents environmentally sustainable maintenance and development standards that contribute to the city's environmental health and climate stability. Examples are the use of low wattage lights in community centers and drought resistant plants in parks.

LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is a green building rating system developed by the U.S. Green Building Council in 2000 that is the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction, and operation of high performance green buildings. LEED certification is available in four progressive levels: Certified, Silver, Gold, and Platinum.

E. Continue the Development of a Strategic Asset Management Plan

1. Build upon and integrate work from the Strategic Asset Management Committee to encompass land, facility, and fixed asset management

- i. Report current and future condition assessments at a detailed level for selected land, facilities, and assets

The Strategic Asset Management Committee is a citywide group working to establish an optimal system for managing City assets.

2. Assign responsibility and accountability in developing the Strategic Asset Management Plan, as well as the amount of investment needed

- i. Dedicate specified staff and resources to update, enter, and analyze data

3. Ensure that the Strategic Asset Management Plan is up-to-date, relevant, and integrated into other systems and decision-making processes

- i. Perform best practices research for asset management, data collection, and analysis
- ii. Assess and improve the current inventory of lands, facilities, and assets to be included in the Strategic Asset Management Plan
- iii. Establish benchmarks that are routinely communicated to staff
- iv. Build on relationships with other City departments to ensure compatibility among different information systems, standardization of data, and open communication

4. Improve Asset Planning and Financial Analysis

- i. Develop systems to enable the Strategic Asset Management Plan to inform and guide the Capital Improvement Plan
- ii. Develop and use lifecycle costing for decision-making
- iii. Develop and implement end-of-useful-life divestiture or demolition criteria for facilities

End-of-Useful-Life Divestiture or Demolition Criteria provide guidelines for determining when maintenance costs for a facility are significantly higher than the value of the community benefit from retaining the facility.

5. Develop a lifecycle-based Facilities Plan to ensure ongoing improvements and updates to facilities and fixed assets

- i. Develop standards that strengthen and ensure long range maintenance
- ii. Develop and implement a plan that encompasses ongoing and preventive maintenance, capital improvement needs, major replacement strategies, and evaluation for divestiture or demolition
- iii. Identify trends in program and service delivery that may impact maintenance and operations for an asset or facility
- iv. Outline a process for asset management planning and related maintenance schedules to be communicated clearly and consistently to staff and the public
- v. Assess current resources (staff, funding) dedicated to maintenance and operations to determine if these levels are appropriate and sustainable

F. Build Upon the System-Wide Emergency Management Plan and Prepare for Citywide Emergencies

1. Develop an updated plan for how Parks and Recreation will operate emergency shelters for disaster relief

- i. Work with the Office of Emergency Management to coordinate emergency management efforts

2. Provide disaster-response training for staff

3. Develop plans to address emergencies that may occur outside of normal operating hours

- i. Strengthen communication channels to inform Parks and Recreation's patrons of emergencies (e.g., overnight guests at Camp Long, etc)

GOAL V: DEVELOP TEAM CAPACITY AND ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Parks and Recreation will develop employee and workforce capacity and organizational culture to provide the internal foundation needed to serve the public successfully. Parks and Recreation considers employees its most important resource in carrying out the vision, mission, and values of the organization. Over the next five years, Parks and Recreation will focus on providing equal access and multiple avenues for employees to learn and grow. Parks and Recreation will achieve this by providing employee professional development and team learning; ensuring human resource practices are aligned with desired organizational changes; the promotion of health and safety; and the implementation of a workforce and succession plan.

A. Increase Opportunities for Professional Development and Team Learning

1. Create a department-wide training plan

- i. Training plan will include policies, initiatives, roles, and responsibilities
- ii. Ensure that training and growth are aligned with Parks and Recreation goals
- iii. Evaluate current training and ensure that Parks and Recreation meets employee needs

2. Provide clear information to staff about professional development and advancement opportunities

- i. Inventory current training, mentorship, and job shadowing opportunities and identify gaps or areas of improvement based on need and demand
- ii. Develop a format in which professional development opportunities are routinely and regularly being presented (e.g. newsletters, emails, bulletins)

3. Expand apprenticeship opportunities beyond the current carpenter, plumber, and electrician trades

4. Continue to provide training and support to supervisors, particularly concerning employee evaluations

- i. Training should outline supervisory roles and responsibilities and the resources and support available for staff development
- ii. Provide clear direction, training, and feedback to supervisors about how to appropriately conduct meaningful performance evaluations
- iii. Develop a plan to implement 360° evaluations
- iv. Identify supervisors' **skill gaps** and strategies to resolve them

Did you know:

- Seattle Parks and Recreation employs over 1,000 people ranging from teen development leaders to construction and maintenance crews and landscape architects to summer-time lifeguards.

A **Skill Gap** is the disparity between current levels of skill proficiency within a workforce or organization and/or individuals based on competency measures including occupation specific skills, technical skills and emotional competency.

5. Provide more cross-training professional development opportunities across divisions

- i. Develop protocols for current and new applicants to list their skills (e.g. foreign languages, technical skills, etc.) to be put into a database that is easy to access and extract information
- ii. Develop ways to allow applicants with language barriers equal access to Parks and Recreation jobs
- iii. Determine specific strategies for how cross-training will be implemented

B. Adapt Human Resource Practices and Processes to Align with Desired Organizational Changes

- 1. Define valued qualities and competencies desired for all Parks and Recreation employees**
- 2. Communicate these values in all employment transactions, such as recruitment, training, and informal and formal performance evaluations**
 - i. Ensure that managers and supervisors are held accountable for communicating and incorporating these values
- 3. Establish cultural competency and diversity in the workplace as organizational values**
 - i. Identify employees who are multilingual and can serve as a translation resource
 - ii. Ensure that cultural competency is an important criterion in all potential hires
- 4. Ensure that all employees demonstrate a commitment to race and social justice issues and understand these issues as they relate to customer service, public engagement, and the development and delivery of programs and services**

C. Promote Staff Health and Safety

- 1. Ensure that safety training is relevant and specific to job duties**
- 2. Provide staff training and communication about safety and safety resources**
 - i. Develop a plan for **Parks and Recreation Security** that positively affects programs, services, patrons, staff, and facilities
 - ii. Increase Parks and Recreation Security's availability to Parks and Recreation staff and communicate their capacity
 - iii. Train staff to implement prevention, maintenance, and intervention strategies for youth
- 3. Provide incentives for employees to adopt healthier lifestyles**
 - i. Explore options for providing a reduced fee or free access to swimming pools, weight facilities, or related programs

Parks and Recreation Security is the staff group assigned to provide security services for parks and facilities.

D. Develop and Implement Workforce Equity and Succession Planning

1. Ensure greater transparency in the hiring process to ensure compliance with the law

- i. Strive to fill vacant positions within the 90-day hiring window
- ii. Improve the application process to ensure accessibility to job openings (e.g. online application system)
- iii. Implement fair selection processes with out-of-classification (OOC) assignments and permanent and temporary positions, as well as discourage pre-selected hires
- iv. Provide greater employment opportunities for temporary employees

An **Out-of-Classification (OOC)** assignment is the temporary assignment of an eligible employee to perform the normal ongoing duties and responsibilities associated with a higher-paying title.

2. Develop a Recruitment Plan for temporary, part-time, and full-time positions

- i. Work with local community colleges and technical institutions to ensure the provision of training and education that effectively prepares people for Parks and Recreation jobs
- ii. Increase youth recruitment, particularly for temporary and part-time employment positions, by working with high schools near Parks and Recreation facilities
- iii. Develop a plan to broaden recruitment efforts in the community

3. Develop a standard orientation process for temporary, part-time, and full-time staff

- i. Work with supervisors and trainers to develop an orientation manual for each employment category that can be tailored or modified to fit specific job functions
- ii. Include an overview of Parks and Recreation's vision, mission, and values in the orientation process and manual
- iii. Examine existing orientation procedures to determine if they are being implemented and how they can be improved

4. Build on existing relationships at community centers to actively recruit minority and immigrant populations

- i. Determine the skill sets needed for vacant, soon-to-be-vacant, or hard-to-fill positions and actively recruit in those areas through increased participation in job fairs, internships, and job shadowing opportunities
- ii. Proactively fill temporary and part-time positions by evaluating how, when, and where Parks advertises for these positions to increase opportunities for minority and immigrant populations

GOAL VI: STRENGTHEN ORGANIZATIONAL SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES

Parks and Recreation will model efficient stewardship of public dollars by strengthening its organizational systems and structures. Parks and Recreation values the efficient and effective management of land, facilities, staff, services, and partnerships. Over the next five years, Parks and Recreation will focus on: identifying best business models to support efficient and effective service and program delivery; optimizing Parks and Recreation's organizational model; developing a Parks and Recreation Management Information System that supports delivery of programs and services; developing recreation management and evaluation policies; and evaluating the existing fees and charges policies. Parks and Recreation recognizes that a key to maintaining positive relationships with policy makers and communities is the achievement of this goal.

A. Identify Best Business Models and **Partnerships** that Support Efficient and Effective Service and Program Delivery

1. Inventory, categorize, and evaluate current and potential Parks and Recreation partnerships

- i. Measure the benefits of current partnerships to Parks and Recreation, the public, and partners

2. Review standard policies and processes for entering into partnerships and contracts

- i. Assess and develop best approaches for delivering services and programs to the public
- ii. Develop a proactive approach and the institutional capacity to build and nurture partnerships and contractual relationships
- iii. Research trends in the profession and among other service providers to assess opportunities for additional partnerships and contractual relationships
- iv. Determine the extent to which Parks and Recreation should actively and intentionally pursue different kinds of partnerships and contracts for delivering programs and services and assess which services Parks and Recreation can best provide internally
- v. Identify opportunities to partner with organizations that are better able to provide services
- vi. Before renewing partnerships and contractual relationships, evaluate them in light of changing policies
- vii. Continue to provide equal opportunities for women and minority businesses

A **Partnership** is a working relationship with another organization that has compatible values and goals and which results in mutual benefits. It may or may not be subject to a formal written agreement. The partnership may be formed around a single activity or event or it may be long-term and multi-faceted.

3. Review Parks and Recreation's Request for Proposals process and policies for partnerships and contracts

- i. Revise and/or update the criteria as appropriate and determine:
 - o How well the agreement aligns with Parks and Recreation's overall mission, vision, and values
 - o Potential costs and benefits to the public and Parks and Recreation from the agreement
 - o Potential impacts on represented and non-represented employees

4. Develop and implement a plan for ongoing evaluation of partnerships, sponsorships, operating agreements, and service providers' contracts

- i. Develop measurable goals and objectives for individual partnerships and contracts with service providers and for the partnership program as a whole

A **Sponsorship** is a relationship in which the sponsor is providing financial, in-kind, or other type of support for a park program or facility in exchange for the opportunity to have themselves recognized.

5. Continue to foster strong relationships with the Associated Recreation Council, Seattle Parks Foundation, and Seattle Public Schools

- i. Negotiate a master agreement with Seattle Public Schools that encompasses current land use agreements between the City and Parks and Recreation

The **Associated Recreation Council (ARC)** is the coordinating board for the Advisory Councils which provide programming in Parks and Recreation facilities. In partnership with Seattle Parks and Recreation, ARC provides policy direction and standardized accounting for the Advisory Councils.

6. Assess legal and financial impacts of divestiture or demolition

- i. Perform a cost-benefit analysis of non-core related activities (e.g. nurseries, printing houses, and operating the West Seattle Stadium) to determine if it is more effective and efficient to perform these activities internally or externally (e.g., through partnerships)

B. Optimize Parks and Recreation's Organizational Model

1. Evaluate Parks and Recreation's organizational structure and make changes to enhance the ability to deliver quality programs and services

- i. Conduct a best practices assessment of successful and innovative organization models, including the organization of information technology functions
- ii. Organize Parks and Recreation so that relationships with strategic goals are clear and can follow best practices
- iii. Realign the Superintendent's Office to emphasize the importance of public engagement, policy analysis, and partnerships

- iv. Determine how the Superintendent's Office can best support implementation of the Strategic Action Plan
- v. Given optimal organization, identify staff headquarters co-location options and the costs and benefits of co-location

C. Develop a Comprehensive and Integrated Management Information System

1. Determine Parks and Recreation information system needs

- i. Determine what data need to be collected both internally and externally to support decision making, management of operations, and performance measurement
- ii. Identify information system needs that support Strategic Action Plan goals
- iii. Establish priorities for the integration of identified information system needs into ongoing planning efforts

2. Evaluate Parks and Recreation's existing information systems

- i. Update existing information system inventory and categorize systems by owner, type of data collected, and the estimated cost of each system's operation and maintenance
- ii. Determine plans for citywide systems (e.g. Summit Financials, Summit Budgeting, Human Resources Information System, Geographic Information System) and how Parks and Recreation can avail itself of these citywide system plans
- iii. Prepare an overview of existing systems and propose opportunities for consolidation and long-term development

3. Develop and implement a Management Information System (MIS)

- i. Compare information systems data needs to data available in existing systems
- ii. Identify skills needed to develop and use new systems
- iii. Reprioritize information system needs, taking into consideration current data availability and factoring in system ownership and system condition
- iv. Identify projects to fill the gaps and develop a business case for each
- v. Identify staff training and development needs related to the MIS Plan
- vi. Develop a MIS plan for sequencing the projects, training, and development
- vii. Examine the current funding structure to identify how much is currently spent on information systems and whether that amount is enough to address Parks and Recreation's needs
- viii. Continue the current strategy of leveraging citywide systems and services provided by the Department of Information Technology and the Department of Executive Administration to reduce costs and increase compatibility
- ix. Continually evaluate, update, and improve the MIS plan in light of changing technology and recreation and demographic trends

D. Develop Recreation Management Policies and Evaluation Criteria

1. Continue to operate programs effectively and efficiently

- i. Increase coordination of service delivery and marketing efforts between programs, facilities, and sectors
- ii. Review best management practices of other organizations offering similar programs and services to determine if different approaches would increase Parks and Recreation's success
- iii. Ensure online registration for all programs, regardless of fee structure or lack thereof

2. Evaluate Parks and Recreation's current programs, services, and outcomes

- i. Review existing program participation data to determine community needs
- ii. Identify and examine the demographic composition of the community within one mile of each of the community centers
- iii. Develop and implement a formal process for evaluating all existing and future programs to ensure that there is an identified outcome that is aligned with Parks and Recreation's vision, mission, and values and is needed within the community
- iv. Develop and implement systems to collect and examine utilization data for all Parks and Recreation's services, including drop-in programs, dog off-leash areas, etc.
- v. Avoid program duplication and look for partnership opportunities by working with local organizations such as government agencies, private entities, nonprofit agencies, and other park agencies in the region

3. Align Associated Recreation Council and Parks and Recreation policies for programs and service delivery

- i. Ensure that the Associated Recreation Council's Advisory Councils reflect community demographics
- ii. Continue implementation of the [Associated Recreation Council Modernization Agreement](#)
 - o Work with the Associated Recreation Council to develop a program evaluation system to assess patron experiences
 - o Work with the Associated Recreation Council to establish a marketing campaign

The **Associated Recreation Council Modernization Agreement** is an agreement between Parks and Recreation and the Associated Recreation Council to plan and implement recreational activities, lifelong learning, and other programs for the public. It outlines roles and responsibilities with respect to program management, human resources, financial management, and marketing and development.

4. Develop systems for making park scheduling more accessible and transparent to the public

- i. Evaluate field and other facility reservation policies to assess opportunities for increasing access and usage
- ii. Evaluate and modify programs and services scheduling to maximize community use and ensure coordination system-wide
- iii. Evaluate schedulable spaces to determine the types of use that could be permitted
- iv. Develop a plan that promotes the use of facilities during off-peak hours

E. Evaluate Fees and Charges Policies for Programs and Services

1. Evaluate current fee structures and establish policies for equity, cost recovery, consistency, and transparency to the public

- i. Conduct best practice research to determine how fees, structures, and rates are set in other park systems across the United States
- ii. Assess Parks and Recreation and Associated Recreation Council's existing price and cost recovery practices and policy frameworks
- iii. Examine different pricing options, including:
 - o Market-based and peak pricing strategies
 - o Consistent pricing across the city
 - o Pricing based on community/individuals' ability to pay
 - o Pricing at cost
 - o The benefits of the program or service to both individuals (direct benefits) and the entire community (community-wide benefits)
 - o Charging for previously free programs gradually over time
- iv. Communicate policies and processes for developing fees to the public, staff, and others
- v. Consider policies and standards for allowing advertisements in Parks and Recreation's brochures, facilities, website, etc.

2. Examine and update Parks and Recreation's scholarship and fee waiver policies

- i. Fully implement the CLASS system's fee tracking capabilities
- ii. Inventory current scholarship and fee reduction offerings and utilization figures
- iii. Allocate a set budget amount or determine a specified fee structure for scholarships
- iv. Evaluate current scholarship levels to determine if standardization is appropriate